

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 10 Bulletin - EPA 910/9-92-043

August 2002

Be Part of Something **BIG**

Register Now for National Water Monitoring Day!

"Be part of something big: help collect data and make a difference." That's an invitation from America's Clean Water Foundation, sponsor of National Water Monitoring Day. October 18, 2002 marks the 30th anniversary of the Clean Water Act. To celebrate, people across the nation will test the quality of their local waterways. No special expertise

or expensive equipment is required. (All methods are welcome, but monitors may order a simple kit for \$16.75 from the web site.) Just register in advance by going to www.yearofcleanwater.org.

Then, on October 18, report your results online for water temperature, dissolved oxygen, pH and turbidity/clarity. Data from across

the country will appear live online that day. America's Clean Water Foundation will publish a report, giving a snapshot of water quality 30 years after passage of the Clean Water Act. Although this is not a scientific study, the event is designed to raise awareness about water quality issues and encourage environmental stewardship.



Year of Clean Water: August is Water Efficiency Month



October 18, 2002, marks the 30th anniversary of the federal Clean Water Act.

To celebrate this milestone, 2002 has been proclaimed the Year of Clean Water. Each month features a theme, and August has been named Water Efficiency **Month**. EPA is providing free materials to help you conserve water supplies and reduce wastewater flows. The materials include a color poster, brochures on using water wisely, a magnet, and a "water wheel" which spins to give tips on conservation. To request a free info pack, call **EPA's Public Environmental** Resource Center at 206/553-1200 or 1-800-424-4372.

For 100 simple ways to save water, visit www.wateruseitwisely.com.
For details about the Year of Clean Water, visit www.yearofcleanwater.org.







October is Children's Health Month!

Across the country health, environment and social service organizations will celebrate children and promote children's health during the month of October. Here at EPA, the focus will be on getting the word out about protecting children from environmental health threats in and around the home.

Kids are not just little adults! Pound for pound, they eat more, breathe more, and drink more than adults. For example, pound for pound, an 18-month old child eats 23 times as many apples as a full grown adult man.

Kids' body systems are also still growing and therefore more easily impacted. Lead, for example, is absorbed at much higher rates in kids' bodies than in adults' and can have irreversible negative impacts on children's developing neurological system. Children's bodies are also not as able to break down and expel toxins.

Parents can take easy, low cost steps to protect their children from environmental health threats.

- ☆ Be certain to wash your children's hands before they eat.
- ☆ Wash toys and floors frequently.
- ☆ Put doormats in front of every door in your home or institute a "shoes-off" policy inside.
- ☆ If you smoke, smoke in a place that will not expose your child to second hand smoke.
- ☆ When choosing cleaning products or other household chemicals (including pesticides), read the label and always try to choose the least toxic alternative that will get the job done.
- If feasible, purchase organic produce and wash all fruits and vegetables well before eating them.

For more information, contact Pam Emerson, EPA, 206/553-1287 or 1-800-424-4372, or email emerson.pam@epa.gov.

Watershed Science Workshop Coming

Not just for scientists! Join EPA in Seattle on August 26 for a Workshop on Best Available Watershed Science. This workshop will bring together some of the most knowledgeable scientists in the field, to discuss recent findings, and to summarize information for management applications. In as non-technical way as possible, the workshop will explore the current state of watershed science. It will also focus on how the best science can benefit projects related to watershed health, water quality, and endangered species recovery. Registration is required and attendance is limited. The workshop is free. To get registration information, e-mail Jordana Jiles, EPA, at iiles.jordana@epa.gov.

Workshops Come to

Funding

Watershed

Oregon

The highly popular **Watershed Funding Workshops** are coming to Oregon! The Boise State
Environmental Finance Center will be offering several workshops throughout the state this fall. The workshops are sponsored by EPA and the Oregon Watershed

Hot Tips for a Cool Summer

Want some Hot Tips for a Cool Summer?
A new EPA web page can help you and your family find ways to reduce pollution and learn about the environment.

You can read about everything from improving the air quality and

protecting our water resources, to having a healthy garden and protecting yourself from the sun's harmful rays.

There are also some great activities and resources for kids. Visit www.epa.gov, and click on Hot Tips for a Cool Summer under Current Issues.



Enhancement Board. The workshops will help watershed councils, advisory group members, tribes, local governments, and others working for watershed protection get the funding they need. Participants will learn about innovative funding strategies, partnership opportunities, and federal, state and private funding sources. These workshops will provide opportunities to learn and share with other groups that have successfully funded their watershed activities. Firm dates and locations will be available after August 15. For information or to register, call Amy Williams, Environmental Finance Center, 208/426-4990.

EPA Launches Watershed Web Site

EPA Region 10 recently launched the Watershed Collaboration and Tools web site. It includes information about capacity building workshops, funding, and other helpful tools that watershed groups can use throughout the region. Also, check the web site for news related to EPA's initiative to protect America's waterways, a proposed grant program to support up to 20 community-based watershed efforts. For more information or to comment on the web site, contact Bevin Reid, EPA, 206/553-1566 or 1-800-424-4372. or email reid.bevin@epa.gov. To access the page, go to www.epa.gov/r10earth. Go to Office of Ecosystems webpage, and click on Watershed Collaboration and Tools.

Idaho has Clean Water Money to Loan



Idaho Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) has money to loan. For the first time in 13 years, \$57.7 million is available in low interest loans for point and nonpoint source projects. Using a new priority ranking system and expanded eligibility. Idaho's Department of Environmental Quality may initially sign over \$5 million for agricultural and stormwater projects. EPA hopes these funds result in significant water quality benefits and assists the state in its clean water goals. To learn more, contact Bill Jerrel, IDEQ, at 208/373-0400, email wierrel@deg.state.id.us. Or, visit http://www2.state.id.us/deg/water/ wastewater/GrantsAndLoans Background.htm.

Handy Resources for Wetlands

Two documents related to wetlands are now available from EPA's Public Environmental Resource Center. For a free copy, call 1-800-424-4372 or 206/553-1200.

Volunteer Wetland Monitoring: An Introduction and Resource Guide: This new 42-page booklet provides individuals and organizations an introduction to why and how people monitor wetlands. It also briefly describes

a few handbooks and manuals that offer more detailed information for the layperson.

Welcome to the Wetlands: This brochure opens into a poster suitable for coloring. It describes threats to wetlands, how they help us, and some different varieties of wetland habitats. A chart of animals that might be found in a freshwater marsh is included. Also available in Spanish.

Report Shows Benefits of EPA Grants

A new report is available called **Helping Our Partners and Benefitting the Environment:** Office of Ecosystems and Communities, FY2000 Grants. In fiscal year 2000, EPA's regional Ecosystems Office (ECO) provided over \$100 million in financial assistance through 100 separate awards. The report gives a snapshot of these grant awards and how those dollars are used. The report also includes project examples. Look for one example from the report later in this issue.

Although the report is based on fiscal year 2000, it generally reflects the ongoing financial assistance work done by ECO. The document can be found on the web at www.epa.gov/r10earth, click on "Index," click on "G" for Grants, go to "Benefits of Grants....". Warning: It's a 1.2 MB pdf file so it takes a while to load! For more information, call John Gabrielson, 206/553-4183, 1-800-424-4372, or email gabrielson.john@epa.gov.



Free Posters!

Four color posters are available from EPA's Public Environmental Resource Center. Any of these posters could be useful in the classroom, or for other purposes. Call 1-800-424-4372 or 206/553-1200 for free copies.

The Worth of Wetlands illustrates different types of wetlands and their functions. It also includes process illustrations and educational text.

Little by Little has a bold illustration of a cresting wave littered with trash and limited text about toxic chemicals in our water.

Estuaries: Scenes of Transition depicts those special places where rivers meet the sea and the many animals which depend on them. [Editor's Note: This poster is a must have for anyone who appreciates the beauty of our natural environment – it's a wonderful piece of work, worthy of framing.]

Watersheds focuses on stream health and the theme, "clean water upstream means good fishing downstream." [Also a thumbs up for appearance.]



Directory of Water Organizations Available

Looking for funding for local drinking water infrastructure? Can't find the phone number for your regional EPA office? The National Drinking Water Clearinghouse offers the **2002 Outreach Resource Guide** to help you. This updated directory lists more than 80 federal agencies and national organizations with water-related interests.

Each entry in the guide includes the organization's address, contact information, web site, water activities, and any publications they produce. Call the Clearinghouse at 800-624-8301 to order the 66-page Resource Guide (Product #WWBKGN36) or e-mail ndwc_orders@mail.nesc.wvu.edu.

Environmental News On-Line

Following are some on-line environmental news resources you may find useful.

Nonpoint Source News-Notes:

This periodic report by EPA focuses on the condition of the water-related environment, the control of nonpoint sources of water pollution, and the ecological management and restoration of watersheds. Web site: www.epa.gov/owow/info/ NewsNotes

CBEP News OnLine: This on-line newsletter offers news and resources related to Community Based Environmental Protection. Web site: www.epa.gov/ecocommunity/news.htm

Pipeline: Pipeline explains small community wastewater treatment issues and technologies to the general public. Each issue features several articles about a single wastewater theme or topic, presented in an easy-to-read, nontechnical style. It's produced by the National Small Flows Clearinghouse with EPA funding. Web site: www.nesc.wvu.edu/nsfc/nsfc_pipeline.htm

Small Flows Quarterly Magazine: This magazine offers readers information about wastewater systems, regulations, products, technologies, and health, finance, and management issues relevant to America's small communities (fewer than 10,000 people). It's produced by National Small Flows Clearinghouse with EPA funding. Web site: www.nesc.wvu.edu/nsfc/nsfc sfg.html

Farm & Home Environmental Management Programs News*letter*: This newsletter is about voluntary pollution prevention programs and new research and policy impacting the management of environmental risk on farms and in homes. It's a forum for news and discussion about ongoing programs and new approaches. The newsletter is produced by National Farm*A*Syst/Home*A*Syst, with support from EPA and others. Web site: www.uwex.edu/ <u>farmasyst</u>



Fact Sheet Discusses Small Wastewater Programs

An EPA fact sheet titled *Waste-water Treatment Programs Serving Small Communities* is now available. This 4-page fact sheet highlights EPA-funded programs that provide financial assistance, technical assistance and training to small communities to construct and operate wastewater treatment facilities.

Programs include:

- * Alaskan Native Villages Sanitation Grant Program
- * Clean Water Tribal Grant Program
- * National Environmental Training Center for Small Communities
- * National Onsite Demonstration Program
- * Operator Onsite Technical Assistance Program 104(g)
- * Rural Community Assistance Program
- * Small Communities Outreach and Education Network

Contact information is provided. The cost is 70 cents plus shipping. To order, call National Small Flows Clearinghouse at (800) 624-8301, and request Item #WWFSGN157. You also may e-mail nsfc_orders @mail.nesc.wvu.edu. Funded by EPA, the NSFC helps small communities find affordable sewage treatment options to protect public health and the environment.

Site Gives Single Data Access Point

Environmental information is just a few clicks away using Envirofacts Data Warehouse. This site offers a single point of access to a wide range of environmental data collected by EPA. You can retrieve information from EPA databases on air, chemicals, facilities, grants, water and many others. Users can search by facility name, geographic location, ZIP code, or Standard Industrial Code classification. Another tool available through this site, **Enviromapper**, generates maps using data from Envirofacts. Visit www.epa.gov/enviro.

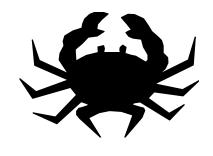
Toxic Releases Down

EPA recently released its annual report of the latest Toxic Release Inventory, which indicates the amount of toxic chemicals released into the environment. The report shows that the total releases of chemicals nationwide has decreased by about 700 million pounds during 2000, the latest year for which data are available. Based on trends since the inception of the TRI. chemical releases have decreased about 48 percent since 1988. The TRI is a tool to help citizens assess local environmental conditions and to help them make decisions about protecting the environment. The 2000 TRI data and background information on the program are available at http://www.epa.gov/tri.

EPA Compliance Assistance Plan Available

EPA's Fiscal Year 2002 Compliance Assistance Activity Plan: An Inventory of Activities is now available. It demonstrates EPA's commitment to help improve environmental performance through compliance assistance. The plan presents a "snapshot," as of February 2002, of the compliance assistance activities that EPA intends to undertake nationally this fiscal year.

The plan summarizes compliance assistance activities that relate to agency strategies, specific chemicals or pollutants, specific industry and government sectors, and certain EPA regulations. For more information or a copy, contact Robyn Meeker, Region 10 Compliance Assistance Coordinator at 206/553-7154 or 1-800-424-4372, or email meeker.robyn@epamail.epa.gov. Or visit the Internet at http://www.epa.gov/compliance/assistance/planning/index.html.





Enviro Ed Grant Benefits Community

Here's one example of an environmental education project that's bringing direct benefit to a local community. With help from an EPA Environmental Education Grant, this innovative project has become a model.

Thurston High School in Springfield, Oregon has developed a comprehensive water monitoring program in partnership with the Springfield Utility Board, Eugene Water and Electric Board, and McKenzie Watershed Council. The students, with the guidance of science teachers and staff from each of the partners, sample and analyze water in nearby creeks that impact local drinking water sources. The students test for a wide range of pollutants and water quality indicators. Split samples for bacteriological and metals analysis are submitted to a certified lab for quality assurance. The students also conduct monthly storm water monitoring in addition to aquatic macroinvertebrate monitoring.

One innovative aspect of the program is the creation of a community-based water testing lab. On Saturdays, students and teachers offer the free water testing service for community members who have private wells. In 10 months, the students have analyzed nearly 200 water samples for local community members.

The students recently presented preliminary findings to the McKenzie Watershed Council. In addition, the students are soon to be featured in a Springfield Utility Board consumer confidence report being mailed to all Springfield residents. For more project details, contact Kristin Hall, EPA, at 206/553-0244 or 1-800-424-4372, or email hall.kristin@epa.gov.

SPOTLIGHT

Following is an edited excerpt from the new EPA Office of Ecosystems Report on FY2000 Grants (see article on page 3). This story is one of many showing the benefit of EPA dollars at work.

Opening the Tide Gates

Tillamook Bay National Estuary Project

<u>Context</u>: Under the Tillamook Bay National Estuary Program (NEP), the loss of tidal fish habitat was noted as a priority issue for salmon resources. Fish access to some side channel sloughs had previously been cut off by levies.

Project: The NEP started the Blind Slough project in 1998, planning to replace blocked tide gates to return the slough to its former function as a salt-fresh water transition zone for fish. Such areas are rare in the lower Tillamook Delta, and this one was the most important slough of all those investigated. About one and one half miles of slough were cut off from functioning. Permission was received from landowners. Permits were applied for from Tillamook County, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and Oregon Department of State Lands. The tide gates were built in the spring of 2001 and installation was completed in July 2001. All the concept development, project planning, and contract preparation and management were made possible by the basic NEP support provided by EPA.

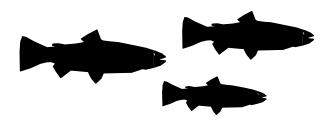


EPA dollars help restore fish habitat.



Results: This project resulted in quick improvements to about 4 acres of tidal marsh habitat. Before installation of the new tide gates, there was no evidence of smolt using the slough, even though there were many sightings of them on the river side of the levee. Within twenty-four hours after installation, hundreds of smolt moved up into the slough and were observed jumping. A plentiful supply of insects should provide good food for the fish, increasing their chances of survival.

Similar quick changes were observed in the slough's vegetation. Prior to this project, the slough was covered with a fresh water weed so thick that it was hard to paddle a boat through it. Within seven days of the introduction of salt water to the slough, the waterweed was gone and the slough was clear and bright. For more information, contact John Gabrielson, EPA, 206/553-4183, 1-800-424-4372, gabrielson.john@epa.gov.



Brownfields Assessment/Cleanup Fund Available

EPA is seeking applications from local governments and nonprofits under the new Brownfields Assessment/Cleanup Fund. The grants can be used to assess, clean up and reuse property with contaminated soil, groundwater and/or surface water. Applications will be due by the end of November 2002 for funding in 2003. These grants are offered as part of the new Brownfields law passed last January. Priority will be given for proposals featuring beneficial reuse (economic, recreational, open space). For more information or a copy of the grant proposal guidelines, contact the EPA Region 10 Brownfields Program toll free at 1-800-424-4EPA.

5 Star Restoration Grants Awarded

EPA recently announced grant awards under the 2002 Five Star Restoration Program. This program provides grants and technical support for restoration of streambanks and wetlands. The program develops knowledge and skills in young people through restoration projects that involve multiple and diverse partners. Partners could include local government agencies, elected officials, community groups, businesses, schools, youth organizations and environmental organizations. The partners contribute funding, land, technical assistance, workforce support or other in-kind services that match the program's funding assistance. Funding consideration is based upon the project's educational opportunities for students and at-risk youth, the ecological benefits, and the project's social and economic benefits to the community.

EPA's funding levels average about \$10,000 per project. To learn more about the 5 Star Program, visit www.epa.gov/owow/wetlands/restore/5star. Or, call Steve Roy, EPA, 206/553-6221, or 1-800-424-4372 or email roy.steve@epa.gov. In Region 10, nine projects received awards this year:

Willow Creek Streambank Restoration, AK Waterlife Discovery Center, ID Gresham City Park Restoration, OR Yaquina River Restoration, OR Community Building for Water Quality, OR Percival Creek Corridor Project, WA Alder Creek Restoration, WA Nisqually Delta Restoration Project, WA Jimmy's Meadows Restoration, WA

Water Taste Test Winner

Congratulations to Columbia Rim Homeowner's Association near White Salmon, WA — first place winner of the third annual **Great American Water Taste Test**! The contest is sponsored by the National Rural Water Association (www.nrwa.org).



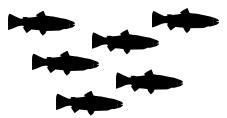
Pesticide Info Center Offers Resources

Have questions or concerns about pesticide use in or around your home or community? The **National Pesticide Information Center** is a toll-free information service which provides objective information on a variety of pesticide related subjects. Sponsored by EPA, the Center offers information to the public and professionals about pesticide products. pesticide poisonings, toxicology, and environmental chemistry. The center can be reached at 1-800-858-7378, or email npic@ace.orst.edu. Or check out their web site at http://npic.orst.edu.

The Fish You Catch. .

A Guide to Healthy Eating of the Fish You Catch is now available from EPA. This small, fold-out brochure tells you how to find out if the waters you fish in are polluted.

Tips for cleaning fish and cooking fish are also included. For a copy, call EPA at 206/553-1200 or 1-800-424-4EPA.



WaterTalk August 2002



Beneficial Landscaping A "Greener" Cut for Your Lawn

'Tis the season for lawn mowing, so here are a few notes to consider while you're pushing (or riding) "la machine":

A perfect lawn usually means a not-so-perfect environment both on and off site because:

- Weed killers are toxic. Consider whether your treated lawn is the best play area for your children!
- Surface runoff containing pesticides and fertilizers pollute streams and degrade the habitat and health of fish and other aquatic life.
- Gas powered mowers emit noise and air pollution. Almost 600
 million gallons of gas are used in the U.S. for lawn mowers, and
 because car emission standards don't apply to them, mowers emit
 as much pollution in one hour as 40 late model cars or one new car
 driving 350 miles.
- Gas vapors from spills and leaky gas cans contribute to smog.
 Annually, Americans spill over 9 million gallons of gas as much as an oil supertanker!

Go "green" by:

- Kicking the weed killer habit.
- Using a push-powered mower, an electric mower, or a mulching mower, which cuts very fine clippings and blows them into the turf where they fertilize the lawn naturally and retain moisture.
- Composting grass clippings that are removed from the lawn for future re-use.
- Avoiding cutting on hot summer days when the air quality is poor.
- Conserving water when irrigating.
- If it's bigger than it needs to be, replacing a portion of your lawn each year with native plants that provide wildlife habitat and that, once re-established, require no supplemental water or fertilizer.

Try a few of these tips – you'll breathe easier!

For more information on this or other topics in Beneficial Landscaping, contact Elaine Somers, 206/553-2966, somers.elaine@epa.gov, or visit our website at www.epa.gov/r10earth.bl.htm.

Portions obtained with permission from Earth Share of Washington newsletter, www.esw.org.

MAILING LIST UPDATE

(check all that apply):

NOTE: There is no need to contact us if the address on your mailing label is correct and you do not wish to make changes.

PAPER SUBSCRIPTION TO WATERTALK:
Please add me to the mailing list for future WaterTalk newsletters.
Please remove me from the mailing list.
Please remove my name from the mailing list. I will view the WaterTalk newsletter on the web when it is available.
WATERTALK ON THE WEB:
Please notify me by e-mail when a new WaterTalk newsletter is available to be viewed on the web.
Please remove me from e-mail notification list.
CHANGE OF ADDRESS: Please change my information on the mailing list or e-mail notification list. My old address or e-mail address is:
Name:
Company or Group (optional):
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Place Stamp Here

MAILING LIST UPDATE

If you have address changes or comments, please complete the form on the reverse side, and

fold and mail to EPA

or

fax to 206-553-2955

or

 $e\hbox{-mail the information to linds} ay. and rea@epa.gov$



August

Water Efficiency Month

26: EPA Workshop on Best Available Watershed Science, Seattle, WA. E-mail Jordana Jiles, EPA, at iiles.jordana@epa.gov.

September

5-6: Oregon Brownfields Conference, Portland, OR. Katie Robertson, 541-278-4620, www.nwec.org

14-Oct 20: Oregon Watershed Weeks. Dozens of watershed education and stewardship events throughout the state. http://seagrant.orst.edu/wweek/

22-24: Annual Biosolids Management Conference, British Columbia, Canada. NW Biosolids Management Association, Washington State University, 253/445-4575, http://capps.wsu.edu/biofest

30-Oct 2: Innovations in Species Conservation: Integrative Approaches to Address Rarity & Risk, Portland, OR. Oregon State University, College of Forestry, 541/737-2329, http://outreach.cof.orst.edu/



October

Children's Health Month

6-9: National Rural Water Association Annual Conference, Spokane, WA. 580/252-0629 or 1-800-332-8715, www.nrwa.org.

15-16: Northwest Environmental Conference, Portland, OR.
Oregon Dept. of Environmental Quality,
Marianne Eitzgerald, 503/229-5946

Oregon Dept. of Environmental Quality, Marianne Fitzgerald, 503/229-5946, www.nwec.org

16: Deadline for contributions to the November issue of *WaterTalk*. Andrea Lindsay, Editor, 206/553-1200 or 1-800-424-4372, lindsay.andrea@epa.gov.

18: National Water Monitoring Day, www.yearofcleanwater.org.

November

8: Northwest Symposium on Organic and Biologically Intensive Farming, Yakima, WA. Washington State University Center for Sustaining Agriculture and Tilth Producers, www.tilthproducers.org, 206/442-7620.

13-15: National Brownfields Conference 2002, Charlotte, North Carolina. EPA, 404/562-8598, www.brownfields2002.org

20-22: Listen to the Ripples: Working Together for Watershed Communities, Redmond, OR. Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board, www.oweb.state.or.us/ or www.oacd.org/



WaterTalk is published each February, May, August, and November by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 10. WaterTalk seeks to be a useful tool for those who protect water resources and ecosystems in communities of the Greater Pacific Northwest, by providing practical resources and relevant agency news.

Mention of trade names, products or services does not convey, and should not be interpreted as conveying, official EPA approval, endorsement, or recommendation.

For mailing changes, or to contact the editor, call Andrea Lindsay at 206/553-1896 or 1-800-424-4EPA x1896, or email lindsay.andrea@epa.gov.

Accessibility information: To request services to accommodate persons with disabilities, contact EPA at 206/553-1200 or 1-800-424-4EPA.

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